



NEWS RELEASE

Office of the
United States Attorney
for the
District of Nebraska
Joe W. Stecher

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August 24, 2009

United States Attorney Joe Stecher and the Federal Bureau of Investigation announce the following information for the attention of the media:

Event Triggering this Release:

On August 24, 2009, a twenty-four count indictment was unsealed charging Mary R. Wong, age 46 of Omaha, with various counts of Securities Fraud, Mail Fraud and Wire Fraud relating to a scheme to defraud investors out of millions of dollars during the period from April, 2005, through August, 2009. Ms. Wong was arrested on today's date and will make her initial appearance before Magistrate Judge Thomas D. Thalken on August 25, 2009.

The Indictment alleges that Mary R. Wong, acting as a financial/investor advisor, devised a "Ponzi"-like scheme to defraud various investors and clients by soliciting millions of dollars of funds under false pretenses. It also alleges Ms. Wong failed to invest the investors' funds as promised, and misappropriated and converted investors' funds to herself and other business entities under her control. According to the indictment she committed these acts without the knowledge or authorization of the victim investors. A "Ponzi" scheme is a fraudulent investment arrangement under which an entity makes payments to investors from monies obtained from new investors, rather than from any profits from any underlying investment. The fraud consists of funneling proceeds received from new investors to previous investors in the guise of profits and/or returns from investments, thereby cultivating the illusion that a legitimate profit making business or investment opportunity exists, and in some cases induces further investment.

The Indictment alleges that Mary R. Wong offered various investment vehicles to her victims. The purported vehicles included Gallup bonds, real estate projects, to include condominiums and a shopping mall in Arizona, as well as various individual retirement accounts. In reality, according to the indictment, none of the investment vehicles existed, and the monies were used, among other things, to pay off earlier investors' interest due on their presumed bonds and to support other business interests of Wong's. The indictment also alleges the funds were used to support a lavish lifestyle enjoyed by Wong and her other business clients. It is alleged in the Indictment that investors' monies were used by Wong to charter private aircraft, purchase expensive homes, and pay off expensive personal and business related credit card debt.

According to Mr. Stecher, the Indictment was a result of a long term investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation here in Omaha. If convicted, Mary R. Wong faces up to ten years imprisonment and \$1,000,000 fine on the Securities Fraud count, and up to twenty years imprisonment and \$250,000 fine on each of the Mail and Wire Fraud counts.

Name of Defendant: Mary R. Wong

AKA:

Age: 46

City of residence: Omaha, Nebraska

Crime(s) Charged and Potential Penalty (A CHARGE is merely an accusation and every defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty): Securities Fraud (10 years imprisonment/ \$1,000,000 fine, 3 year term of supervised release); Wire Fraud/Aiding and Abetting (20 years imprisonment/ \$250,000 fine, 5 year term of supervised release); Mail Fraud/Aiding & Abetting (20 years imprisonment/\$250,000 fine, 5 year term of supervised release).

Specific Location of Alleged Crime: Omaha, Nebraska

Location of Arrest: Omaha, Nebraska

Alleged Dollar Loss/Type and Quantity of Drug:

Others Charged in Same Scheme: N/A

Relevant Dates:

Date of Alleged Crime: April, 2005 - August 15, 2009

Federal Arrest Date: 08/24/09

Date Complaint Issued: N/A

Indictment Returned Date: 08/19/09

Initial Appearance Date: August 25, 2009

Plea or Trial and Date(s):

Sentencing Date:

Next Court Hearing Type and Date: Initial appearance and arraignment–August 25, 2009

Assigned Magistrate Judge: Thomas D. Thalken

Held without Bond, or Released from Custody:

In Continuous Custody Since: August 24, 2009

Assigned District Court Judge: Laurie Smith Camp

Initials of Assigned AUSA/Preparer of THIS Release: RXM